



CRYPTIC:SLAUGHTER:13





this is cryptic slaughter zine #13.
this is the issue for summer of the
year 2000. my name is giovanni. ok?
this zine is \$1ppd, or a decent 2x
trade (that means no flimsy three-
page "zine" thatk you slapped to-
gether in an hour, fuckers.) if you
like this issue, or can tolerate it
or whatever, i have some previous
issues still around. write to me.
would you like to trade mix tapes?
we could do that shit too. i have
not really done a real thank-you
list in some time, mainly because
i hate everybody and they hate me
and anyone who is a friend of mine
when i write a thank-you list hates
me a few days later when i'm ~~not~~
printing the zine up. that said,
although some of these people are
on some petty hate-me shit right
now, thank-you to, most of all,
tyann, and aybille, renoir and
isabelle, the cats, hannelle, duane,
cassy, travis, and to the people who
write to me & who i write to.
as for the rest of you, kiss my
fucking ass.

Giovanni // p.o. box 1781 //
spokane // washington // 99210

get screwed over so often by the rad that it's easier to just call everything shit. the other reason is that most everything *is* shit. this zine is not shit. it is rad. from this issue, i found a new 'favourite' zine: not favorite hierarchically i don't mean, but one that i favour. this zine contains articles on a number of things: self-concept, war and peace, prisoner's literature project, cops, crushes, and the public library. fuck, it's great. my favorite article was the one on the san francisco public library, and their systematic trashing and destruction of books to make way for private/government interest. i am a great fan of libraries (the mere concept!) and such-like, so this totally interested me. new modern libraries are being built, obstinately to provide more 'space' or something, though certainly not for books, as janice shows. i would sum up the article here, but i wouldn't be able to do justice to it. this zine is worth reading for this article alone! the last page also kicked ass- it's a reprint of a flyer from a group called 'lesbian and gay insurrection'. it's anti-marriage. that in itself is so fucking awesome. i despise this institution. everyone was cheering and hooting when vermont passed some sort of same-sex marriage law recently, and i was cheering a bit too, despite my stance on marriage. this is because in the capitalist/religious society that is the US, health care and tax breaks and immigration rights revolve around this marriage crap. but i believe more strongly in what this flyer says: "shouldn't our community [gay-? it doesn't say- everyone i hope / read it to mean. -ed.] be fighting for us *all* to have access to health care, whatever our 'marital status'?" (italics mine). fuck yeah! of course, i say don't be so damn conservative, and just call for the fight to destroy capital and such, but i don't know the exact political leanings of this group: it suffices to say that they are on the right track and it's awesome. this entire fucking zine is. do you want to know really what it's sort of like? sort of like listening to born against while reading tim sheehan's *better days* (also from s.f.-?). seriously, i got like born against / sam mcpheters (pre-self-indulgent vacuous men's recovery project era) kind of feelings from this zine! pretty weird. MRR doesn't like it when i make fun of Sam McPheeters (see zine reviews, MRR #206 or so)- fucking get over it. if he was still producing music of the calibre of Born Against i might be more willing to kiss his ass, but c'mon... anyway, this zine is fucking top-notch. this issue is from mid-1999 or so, so if there are new issues out, by all means fucking get them, and this one as well (janice says she plans to keep this shit in print for a while). BONUS: comes with a patch! yahoo!



pretty much suck. this one sucked less. i wouldn't send off for it (no price is listed anyhow), but i would read it on the toilet, and i'm sure there are piles of it for free at every record store in missouri.

my views change over time #6 (price: "a hand full of sunflower seeds" [note: it does not say 'a handful', but rather 'a hand full'] [????] / rob / p.o. box 2671 / gainesville / fl / 32602-2671)

i would love to see rob getting a greasy envelope full of sunflower seeds for printing nonsense like that. man. so i know rob, and i don't want that to interfere with this review. let me say though: i would never believe the rob i know and the one that did this zine are one and the same. the rob i knew lived exclusively and single-mindedly for school/mob activities like marches, meetings, "celebrations", slide presentations on third-world countries, etc.: stuff that was so utterly pointless and deadening that at the mere mention of his 'activism' i would be half-way across town seeking solitude and a book or something. however, this zine is just the opposite! there is personality, humanity, thought, individuality: everything that he didn't seem to possess in person! it's great. lots of personal writing on living situations, his family, and so on, and even some drawings. past issues of this zine were mediocre; this one is the best yet. i was disheartened to hear young rob contemplate "quitting doing the zine" as it was "pointless". but you see, to each their own: what he finds worthwhile (rambling lectures from bearded hippies in cut-off short-short jeans) i find excruciatingly painful; but on the other hand, i find his writing very worthwhile and he sees it as "pointless". see the *complete control* review for more on 'each doing their own'. send rob \$1 and tell him to buy himself some sunflower seeds from the Little Champ, or perhaps a spinach pie from Gyros Plus. fucking gainesville. BONUS: there is a drawing in here of a Holiday Inn, of which a Denny's (not pictured) adjoins the premises. at this greasy rot spot, they once slipped me caffeinated coffee under the guise of "decaf" and left me jittering and shaking and feeling sick to my stomach the rest of the night. the fuckers will pay.

cutlass #4 (\$1 / janice / po box 16651 / san francisco / ca / 94116)

one of the disadvantages (perhaps the greatest disadvantage) to being a critical asshole is not having any friends. i try to deal with it. another disadvantage is being generally low and depressed about most things, due to the critical eye. and along with these drawbacks comes another: that it is much easier for me to call shit shit than to call the rad rad. part of it is probably self-preservation or something: i

i. spokane

winter started retreating and the snow began not to fall quite so often. the days slowly got longer, and sometimes the sun even came through. it was not warm enough for shorts yet, but it was warm enough to not wear a jacket in the daytime, provided one wore some thick sweaters.

and i began to get the desire to leave town. i had made it through the winter, which is always the toughest for me, and if i were into planning or common sense, i would have left during the winter instead of moaning my way through it only to leave come spring. but as soon as the idea of leaving town came to me, i could not think of anything else.

and then gainesville began to come up on my mind. i peeled a postcard off the wall, an ad for one of glen e friedman's photo-books. on the other side was a brief note travis had written me six months earlier, inviting me to come and live there in gainesville. i paid the note little consideration at the time, since i had just moved in with sybille and was happy with our apartment and cats and my job. but now me and sybille did not get along so well; and while i did not despise my job, it was becoming a drudge, and in this light travis's offer took on a new relevance. i had no great inkling of what gainesville was all about-- it did not appear on any maps, and people shrugged confusedly when i mentioned that i should like to move there. "it's smaller than spokane!" people who had heard of it would say. "way smaller!"

yes, it was, i conceded.

"you mean to say you're going to move to some small hick-town in the south that

you don't know anything about?" they would ask.

i knew a little about it, though. i knew that half the decent punk bands and zines of the last five years hailed from gainesville. i knew some of the local 'scene activity', from having written back and forth with travis for a few years previous. it was small, that was true, but the 'scene' and life-style of people there seemed bigger and better and greater than we could ever muster here. i mean, there were local bands! people wrote zines, and put out records! spokane's population of half-a-million could muster none of this. and, it was nice and sunny.

i put in my two weeks at the coffee roasting plant; the boss hugged me and my co-workers lamented on the prospects of no-more of our lazy afternoons in the warehouse listening to don and mike and shit-talking everything there was to shit-talk.

i told my room-mate becky i was leaving; her ridiculous thieving crustie parties being another motivation for me to leave. i made a point of going to coffee with everyone i knew, all three or four of them, and making them wish me luck. i hauled all my junk into my parent's basement and gave the rest to sybille.

travis seemed excited that i would come down there; he offered me his place to stay in until one of the other myriad prospects for living he had mentioned materialized. i bought a very cheap plane ticket and became antsy.

a week later, i said good-bye to renoir and isabelle, my little kittens, and sybille drove me to the airport. i hauled my trunk and backpack up to the ticket counter and said good-bye to spokane.



hypocritical as fuck: he says: "i really hate about 95% of the bands that play metal-hardcore... the aesthetic of mid-tempo mosh metal... leaves a bad taste in my mouth.. it's really shifted people's definitions of what's hardcore, and that's disturbing to me... that's offensive to me... labels that really focus on putting out metal packaged as hardcore have contributed to widening the gap between hardcore and punk..." and they put out music on VICTORY Records!!! what a bunch of suckers! their band is for the birds, too- who are they trying to fool? 'tilt' is next; nothing interesting. the buzzcocks follow. i kinda like them i guess, but not in fucking 2000! there are some photos of their ruddy, puffy-faced O.A.P. faces as well. next we have Dave Smalley. i love dag nasty, but it's now 2000, and dave smalley is as relevant as fucking the buzzcocks i guess. there's a couple more lame interviews, people's "top twenty albums of the 90s" (a few people say 'tribe called quest': stoked) with such boners as "the Melvins", "Radiohead", "the Cadillac 'ramps", "the Lunachicks", etc etc. ugh. finishing up the zine is about twenty pages of music and zine reviews, mostly major-label MTV crap / misogynist rape-rock. i didn't read them, but i'm sure if i did, i could find some good quotes to reprint. this zine was not all bad for what it was: newsprint, safe, middle-of-the-road opinion and writing, shitty ads, etc- there are a million of these zines out there and they all



ii. gainesville.

travis and mike picked me up at the airport and drove me up to gainesville. my first clue that something wasn't quite right with this pair was when we rolled into tampa—we were nowhere near gainesville. i had avoided speaking up about our strange route for a couple of reasons: firstly, because i was dead sleepy and didn't know florida anyway, and secondly because of the warning that sybille had given me before i left: be quiet, keep to yourself, and do not give the people you meet "too much giovanni too soon". such a thing can be fatal to friendships.

but i could read a map, and it showed we were most assuredly headed in the wrong direction. so i rubbed the sleep from my eyes and guided us back to gainesville.

travis said i could stay with him until i found a place to live. such places were plentiful, he said: everyone needs a room-mate or wants to make their rent cheaper. the most likely place for me, he said, would be with this fellow 'kurt', out of palatka. travis planned a dinner with them for later in the week.

i stumbled around the first week or so, one of my eyes bloodshot from allergens or something—sleeping in travis's shed out back, or with the drooly dog Mopar on a fold-out couch. people came and went in the house, usually giving me the stank eye or berating me about something. when i tried to communicate or talk to people, it came off as sarcasm or criticism. and then one week became two, and two became three.

i went to dinner with this gangly thirty-year old fellow, kurt, and his wife. he refused to speak to me, although the dinner was supposedly for him to invite me to live with him—he had an empty room in his house. i tried to make conversation: i noted that i met him when i had put on a show for a band he was in, four years ago. his eyes lit up for a minute, but then he

Montréal in the late eighties. this is an important story, but whoever wrote this summary is unfamiliar with writing, and did not bother to punctuate, which kind of cheapens the story. there's some other short bits (straight-edge and veganism; an 8.5" x 11" run-on sentence on Richmond Food Not Bombs from *RVA Punk Nation* (that really makes me want to get involved [sarcasm]); some cool-looking but poetic text from *kole kole*, and a few more). the remainders are standouts: kim's description of new orleans, from *square suckers / teenage death songs* is humbling and beautiful. andrew necci (who once drove to spokane looking for me, and instead was given the stank eye by a fellow in a Makers shirt—sorry, andrew; i was in Europe: this was 1997 and i've not heard from him since) of *nothing is cool* proves he is still alive with possibly one of the greatest articles i have ever read in my life, period. this zine is worth it for his bit alone. after reading it, i sat there for a half hour before i could go on.

greg does the *complete control* run-down on Richmond Critical Mass; Sam McPheeters and Aaron Cometbus' Richmond map from *error* shows up in here; "Punk Rock Pride", from *automatic IOU* made me stoked because i am proud to be punk, unlike most people i've ever met, who are ashamed to be punk. *dreamless* zine got a shitty review in CS a while back; if it was all as good as his playground reviews in here, i'd get every issue. everything is spelled wrong, though. "book your own vacation" (*chump*) relates the story of this band that rented ad space on a non-existent van to buy a van to go on tour: pure genius, pure comedy, and purely ridiculous. from *every other* is an anti-circumcision piece. very important, and very neglected! i am lucky to have my foreskin, i must say: seems i am very rare in that with the boys i meet who can bring themselves to discuss the tips of their cocks. another cock is Ben White, who presents a quiz called "How pretentious are you?". by cock i mean asshole (???) and by asshole i mean comrade: high-five, Mr White!

"Bob is Gone", from *friend or foe* is about the guy from Maximilian Colby who died / was killed. Why a bigger fuss was not made of this i don't know—everyone at the time muttered "ah, a tragedy" and put on an Avail album or something (sorry, bro, Avail sucks). However, this article makes it out like he was murdered by cops! Is this so—??? Even the college-rock doufuses of 'Punk Planet' put a dude with a floppy mohawk on their cover when he was murdered, but what about Bob? (oh, man.)

This is getting too long: Dishwashing, murders, coffee. Awesome. Read this. \$2 is kinda steep, ask for chris to toss in an issue of *gullible* too. i mean, one with his writing in. Fucking Richmond!!!

'narrow' idea of literacy. in many ways this is true: french and italian and portuguese, for example, are just garbled, mispronounced latin. likewise english, ultimately, to germanic. i guess this is sort of a tough one. i think english is pretty fucking flexible (look at france, for example— do we have a fucking Bureau of Linguistic Purity, fining people for using loan-words like *kimono* instead of the cumbersome-but-english [or french equivalent] "strange foreign costume having short wide sleeves and a sash"?), and changes very, very rapidly as it is (for example, compare to-day's writing to the writing in a newspaper of forty years ago— and then twenty years before that— and so on and so forth. american and english writing from the turn of the century (i refer to the nineteenth / twentieth) is full of anachronisms, strange grammar, and peculiar phrasing. time has passed; some spellings have standardized, or fallen out of ~~favour~~ (or *favor*, if you will); styles of writing have come and gone like fads; my point being that linguistic change will most likely happen no matter what, and this change does not seem to be the attributable to 'bad writing'. and i have no problem with people breaking occasional rules of grammar for effect, or just because; likewise, much zine-writing is done in a conversational, colloquial style appropriate to our scene. however, poor writing is poor writing, and mis-using words seems to me to be more of a degradation rather than a mutation or progression. i am a linguist, and i could discuss this all day— maybe i shall before too long— but back to the reviews.

next, from *steady diet of peanut butter and jelly* (maybe the best zine name i have heard in 5,000 years), a short, awesome piece on richmond as home. from *lioness* is the story of the massacre of the female students in

went back to fiddling with his chopsticks and gossiping about local burn-outs with travis. his wife didn't talk, either.

i never heard from them again, and so i stayed in travis's house. i lived off peanut-butter and jelly sandwiches and tried to stay out of the way. but i missed hanging out with people. i wrote post-cards to tyann and hannele, telling how i missed them. i called sybille and tried to act like i was having a good old time. i read a lot, took baths, and got bored. i tried to pet the cat, Vespa, but she scratched at me and ripped open a capillary under my eye. it made me miss

my own kitties even more, for they were never so naughty.

i looked into getting a job, only to find that minimum wage in florida was \$4.90— a far cry from ours of \$6.50. and the only jobs available, everyone told me, were telemarketing. i still scoured all over for people to meet and a place to live. i put up signs to these effects. no response. nothing. i killed time reading old zines and pacing in the record store. and the days came and went.



iii. gaines ville-

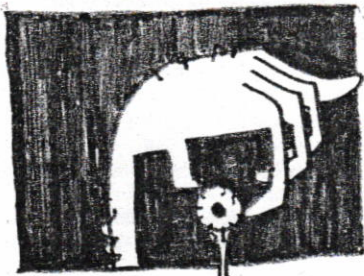
every night
there were parties.

every night there were parties. i dutifully tagged along to them for want of anything better to do, hoping i would meet someone interesting; a place to live; someone to hang out with. i was still an outsider, though, so i could observe.

the parties were invariably filled with hipsters- everyone in their trendy little costumes, looking oh-so-hip, all trying to pull off some ridiculous look or another. there were a million new faces but *none of them looked interesting*. they all looked the same: they all looked like clones or something. i would sit and think: it's so obvious i'm not from here, that i'm not part of this scene. i'm not tall and thin, with thick glasses and butt-tight polyester pants. i don't have the hip hair-cut. i don't wear long pants when it's eighty-five degrees out. i'm not married or engaged or "post-punk".

it was all generally irrelevant, but it was all i saw. everyone stumbled around drunk: inebriation is the same anywhere. i never saw any fights, and the bands that played at these parties were invariably acoustic rather than electric: these facts significant of something i can't express. and i knew that had i never met Travis, i might be presented a completely different scene.

i would find a spot separate from the parties, and write and think: i can sit in the hallway, and keep to myself and be not bothered. no-one pays attention, save their tripping over me. roy walks by and says hi; but i live with him. and maybe mike taylor even says hi, but



fear why the mouse can't breathe #1

(stamp / al / 5258 five fingers way / columbia / md / 21045)

al is a long-time *cryptic slaughter* reader (for the last year, at least! uh...) and he's one of the select few of two or three that have ordered *cryptic slaughter* more than once. so he asks that i 'be gentle' on his review- fair enough, al. this is a brief zine, mainly about girls that al is hot for. i can associate with the subject matter one hundred percent, but this zine is not very interesting. more interesting were the musical influences: crimpshrine, still life, and cleveland bound death sentence. i think i'll go listen to all those bands right now.

gullible #20 : reprints from various

richmond zines, 1995-2000 (\$2 / chris terry / p.o. box 4909 / richmond / va / 23220)
reprint zines are fucking great i think. i guess not if you plan on reprinting tired old anarchist slogans and flyers, or shitty interviews from other magazines, but compiling worthwhile shit to reprint is fucking great. i've always wanted to do something like that, but feared the 'audience' would be too small; and besides, don't most punks "grow up and mature" into the Industry Leaders of To-morrow, and dismiss their zine writings of yesteryear as youthful hogwash? i don't know; it's rhetorical, asshole. these are all richmond zines, like the title says. i was familiar with a few of them- *square suckers*, *hot rod suicide* / *nothing is cool, complete control, cometbus* (via error), *general strike*, *every other, gray matter*, etc (in fact quite a few of these have been praised in *cryptic slaughter* over the years). i generally adore richmond zines, so i knew i would be in for a wonderful time here.

first off is 'the bread riots', from *hinokley* zine: political history of a civil war-era riot in richmond. not bad, and told well, although the author is rather unfamiliar with english ('effect' for 'affect', as well as untensed verbs). on this topic, me and tyann were talking this afternoon, and she brought up that language cannot really progress / mutate as it does if people like myself promote our

make any sense of, thus negating the very reason for writing them down! add to this the fact that most of the stories just stop, mid-sentence, and are continued fifteen or twenty pages later (??). not all of the stories are hideous- the editor, "skot!" (how that is pronounced i do not know- it is generally accepted in orthographic circles that '!' represents a sound most easily approximated by clicking with the tongue and teeth. the most famous example of this is the !Kung tribe, in Africa. however, as proof that this orthograph is generally accepted worldwide, look no further than sacto band "!!!", who most people i have met pronounce as three clicking sounds [though years ago, before !!! formed per se, one of their future members assured me it was also possible to pronounce "!!!" by clapping three times, or stomping one's foot three times, or even waving one's hand in the air thrice]- so as for how one pronounces 'skot!' i don't know) has some stories that are generally pretty decent. cindy, of *doris* zine, has a brief bit on hitching through russia; 'sara' gives a bunch of hitching tips, which are good (if still typo-ridden) reading; "brackincita the rubber tramp" (???) has a good story. the rest are handwritten (i.e. illegible) slop, and the ones that are typed are either still illegible, make no sense, or are a five-page run-on sentence. this zine is the kind of thing that rots my mind: so full of misspellings and lack of punctuation that before long you find yourself falling to that level. they say television rots one's mind, but i can watch a half-hour of 'seinfeld' and come off entertained and happy, or i can read this zine and be pressured by remedial english flunkies to stoop to their level. learn your fucking native language or don't fucking write. SHITTY "BONUS": this fucker, "skot!", mailed me this zine and did not affix enough postage to it- therefore the post office made me pay "postage due" of fifty-five cents just to get it! this sort of "scam" is unacceptable. so watch out for 'skot!'; he's a wiley fucker.

spaghetti dinning and dancing #14

(\$1/trade / randy / po box 2536 / missoula / mt / 59806)

mustashioed montanan lives with humourless hippies in frozen cabin; eats chickens and defends buffalo. why not defend chickens and eat buffalo? why not not eat either? i think this is probably the closest zine in the world to cryptic slaughter, in terms of geography, but whereas my zine generally rejects hick-dom, this zine embraces it. fair enough in some respects; ridiculous in others. the second half of the zine discusses the author's favourite zines: all the hipster crap is there, like *burn collector* and *scenery*. no *cryptic slaughter* though, so i'll have to cut this review short. excellent zine.

he picked me up at the airport.

a fly on the wall?, i would think.

i don't know. it's not like i'm trying to be. and the parties were not for my benefit anyhow, they were so the residents of gainesville could get drunk and see friends and have their good times. i'm sure i made most, if not all of the observations at these parties. i guess that says more about me than it does gainesville.

as an outsider, i was dead interested in their scene, but as in insider, i was repulsed. that i learned early.



definition, but one not applied to destructive alcoholics in general- man, i don't know. way out of my league.

the zine is half legal-size and on yellow paper (which is cool) and resembles nothing more than *doris*, both in the layout, art, and even writing (drunken ramblings and misspelled head-scratchings). and in spite of / despite all this, i recommend it. its worth reading, well-written for the most part, and very evocative of s.f. in many ways- all of which make me soglad i don't have to live there. read it...

sandstorm... #2 (no address... uh... duh...)

i admit i picked this up because it looked interesting. unfortunately, the writing is emo flotsam and poetic jetsam that i can't make heads or tails out of- my head is not enough in the clouds or up my ass or wherever it must be. personal writing, poetry (grunt), and so on. my favourite bits were a quote from mark rothko (one of my favourite artists), a photo of tonie joy's back as he wanks it up on guitar, some thing about Submission Hold's house, and the play-list: every band Tonie Joy was in, and some other ones for good measure. the strangest thing is a list of the editor's all-time favourite shows: one of them is January 23, 1997: Edaline, Blackjackaction, and Foray, at the Matt House. i happen to have been at this show (it was in Santa Rosa); there are photos from it in cryptic slaughter seven; tim sheehan lived in the back-yard and whitney alien spray-painted a star on my back-pack. so whoever wrote this zine (no name is anywhere) i must have met or seen; whoever that is i don't know. so it's kind of weird. man.

rule of thumb 1999 (\$2 [and then some] / skott / 25686 nugget st / el toro / ca / 92630) large, sloppy zine of hitch-hiking stories. i am a seasoned veteran when it comes to hitch-hiking, and many an issue of *cryptic slaughter* has had its share of hitchin' tales, so i was prepared to be stoked. i was pretty disappointed. the stories in here are basically the experiences of illiterate hippies. okay, i don't know for sure that they're all hippies, but with names like "wild-flower" and "harmony" and tales of smoking wacky weed, i am sure that bell-bottoms and dumb-ass jewellery are not far behind. as for illiteracy, all the stories in here are grammatical nightmares, the spelling is on par with the average four-year old, typos run rampant, and there is a complete disregard for the meanings of words used (my favorite is this line: "Delirium prevailed our attitudes." (sic) what???? it sounds like some crusty Japanese compilation!) i know to a lot of people, illiteracy is "punk", but to the rest of us, it makes the stories impossible to follow or

WANTED = PLACE to LIVE

MY NAME IS GIOVANNI. i JUST
MOVED HERE. i NEED A PLACE TO
LIVE. i DON'T HAVE HELL OF MONEY,
JUST A LITTLE BIT. i NEED A PLACE
FROM NOW UNTIL MID-JUNE !!!
i AM QUIET, WELL-BEHAVED, ETC.

i can be reached via WAYWARD
COUNCIL or Travis Fristoe, or
leave a note or talk to me 336-
2961
i look like this →
thank-you, friends.



fanshen is not so good— sort of like spazz, and they have about ten thousand short songs on their side- and some weirdo spoken sections— it's still really good, i just prefer the other side. their lyrics are a little more spacey and poetically naïve, but not in a bad way. their band had to break up so one of them could go to Bangladesh! crazy. both bands on here are really really good and i really recommend this. this record is sort of like a band that calls you wanting a show, and you've never heard of them, and they turn out to be sorta weirdos, and then they play, and you are amazed and blown away.

black label #1 (james / 1629 16th st / oakland / ca / 94607)

i honestly cannot believe this. i honestly don't know if this is for real. i am at a loss for words. man. this zine is SO fucking far from my life and experience and outlook as to be from another planet or something. i was shocked and surprised and offended. i laughed; i cried. well- maybe not- but this zine is fucking insane. it is a diary of an alcoholic in san francisco. as i read it, i thought 'this has got to be fiction', but it's not i don't think. it's like if you read some henry miller thing at face-value- like if 'tropic of cancer' was a fact-filled autobiography or something.

this guy drinks, drinks, drinks and blacks out each day. that is it, really. he writes about how much he drank (in excruciating detail- beer brand, size, quantity, price, etc- reminding me a bit much of david hayes' [why is this fucker still turning up in my zine? begone, deamon] one-off *rehab* zine in its shameless alcoholic precision).

this fellow, james, lives in a hotel (??) - actually, he migrates from hotel to roach hotel- has a job, but spends all his money on beer- and in the meantime, eats mass quantities of greasy hamburgers (??). it sounds like the recipe for a total loser- and it is- but i was strangely interested in the writing.

i honestly don't understand- the solution to these problems seems simple enough- first, move the fuck out of san francisco, because only nutcases can pay rent there. get on the fucking greyhound if need be, and head for- say, spokane, or some other burg with cheap-ass rent. then, the living arrangement is set. as for the alcoholism part- well, i can't help there. if i could rid people of alcoholism, spokane would have a thriving punk rock scene, for a start.

so this fellow just stumbles from bar to bar, blacking out and moaning about his lack of money. and i found it very interesting. i have never met a drunk who could articulate their reasons for being a drunken loser- and while james doesn't go that far here, he is at least open and admitting of it. i don't think i would want to hang out with him, because he is so far from my idea of 'cool'- not a very strict

iv. gaine sville - baffled.

travis invited me along to a marxist conference. it wasn't going to be marxist to-night, though, he said: anti-capitalist, but not marxist. it was a fellow named Thomas Frank, or Frank Thomas, or some such combination. i didn't know him. "he does a zine called *the Baffler*," explained Travis. i don't read the publication, but i do know it's not a "zine"- it's just some expensive UPC-code pseudo-intellectual (and that's so annoying) magazine, which is dreadfully boring, and is sold in trendy "hip" bookstores. i don't know: i have an almost instinctive mistrust of this sort of thing. i went and looked at a recent issue- Travis had them all organized orderly on the shelf- it was full of academic ramblings, advertisements from Lookout! and Sony Records, and record reviews (decidedly out of place) that said things like "this is a hardcore record... hardcore is a sort of punk music..." and then has to explain to the reader what punk was and that "punk still exists". what sort of audience did this magazine cater to—? jaded pseudo-intellectuals who want to pretend to be 'political' or 'anti-capitalist' but who don't want to associate with such proven extremist crap as 'anarchism' or something. i dunno. but who cares, and anti-capitalism is better than capitalism any day of the week. and travis held this fellow in high regard- and what else was i doing? and so we walked down to the university, talking about bikes and nearly being run over at every corner.

and the talk was sort of interesting. it was all so elementary, but perhaps not to this fellow's audience. and then it would disintegrate into economics: "stock prices" and such esoteric nonsense that made no

sense to me. i found myself wishing he would speak more concretely: he spoke well enough, but talked mountains on the most insignificant obtuse abstractions. travis said it was "brilliant," especially "the part about the labour unions". i must have missed that part. i enjoyed the talk, but brilliant? it seemed like middle-of-the-road liberalism, clouded over with tentative, wishy-washy opinions on capitalism. fair enough, but not brilliant.

everyone left the classroom the talk was held in, and wandered over to a stately manor wherein was being held a 'reception'. and people drank wine and mingled, and i read the *Times* Literary Supplement and ate the snacks- hummus and "sun-dried tomatoes," Travis said. but the hummus tasted like shrimp pâté, and the tomatoes resembled and tasted like soggy pepperoni.

we went home, me holding my stomach and moaning. "nonsense," said Travis. "It was delicious hummus." and i moaned "shrimp pâté."

"no, it was Greek food," he insisted.

"and i reckon the Greeks fish a bit, surely, and that was their seafood platter," i grumbled, "and i feel sick".

and i thought of the speaker, Tom or Frank or whoever, in his sports jacket, going around giving bland speeches, getting paid, and getting tipsy at the wine table, eating grilled chicken and "cold cuts". and maybe his "zine" is really good, and perhaps he has some fine ideas and right-on observations, but i was glad that wasn't me. i was glad i didn't know him or respect him, cause i would have been so let down. travis was happy though. and i lay myself down, and let my stomach hurt, heavy and leaden and dyspeptic and shitty. it's always like this. it really fuckin' is.

in the mirror. Are you writing songs? Are you working on a zine? Who's to blame for a lousy scene? You are!". now this is just bunk. First off, my scene sucks. i work on a zine plenty. maybe i even write songs! does that make my scene cool? duh! NO! it keeps me busy and productive. it *does not* make the other 99.9% cool! duh! even if i were to somehow round up some other people to start this raging band that is going to make my scene cool (??), what is so cool about four people playing conflicting versions of 'punk rock' to a room full of Christians? and let me tell you this- i don't even sell my zine in spokane anymore after local punks began holding 'book-burnings' where they destroyed copies of my zine due to inflammatory writings and differing opinions contained therein. now, i might ask Bob Suren, since my scene sucks, why am i to blame? i refuted the two reasons given in his argument, which, as it turns out, amounts to a hill of beans, perhaps with which he can make his 'Burrito' Records.

stormshadow / fanshen split lp (634 monmouth / port monmouth / nj / 07758) this was the only music i got for review this issue! man, what a shame. i used to get records to review all the time in the olden days, then the labels got wise that i was writing my honest opinions of the music (i.e., "this fucking sucks") instead of playing their industry kiss-ass game. oh well. this record is awesome. when i first got it i was really skeptical. the bands names suck, the record sleeve looks stupid, and i hadn't heard of the bands- and i got a nagging feeling they were christian or something. i mean, i'd never seen any ads for them; never seen their music reviewed or anything- so i thought they must exist in some alter-scene. but i scoured the booklet and music for any hint at religion and found nothing but circle-A's and crudos t-shirts. so i still have a nagging feeling, but this is really awesome. if this turns out to be religious i will be so pissed off. it is a sad day when no-name bands come round and i have to convince myself they aren't religious wingnuts trying to pull one over on ol' giovanni... such is modern punk. anyway: stormshadow are awesome- they have a girl and boy singer and i cannot compare them to anything. actually sometimes maybe like coleman? and other times like slower bits of palatka or something-? i am grasping at straws because i cannot compare things musically. there are many fast parts, many "token emo" parts, many weird spoken parts- quite varied. i really like it. i listened to their side over and over. their part of the booklet looks like reversal of man stuff sort of, and then they have pages of explanations! they sing about foreign policy, advertising, class, kurt vonneget (?), love, and my life struggle, mental illness. ok, this is fucking amazing.

twain meet? i don't know. in some occasions they do; mostly they do not. show me a situation and i will write well about it; put me in that situation and i will trudge off home to read a book. honestly. so this is a digression of sorts from greg's zine and writing, but important to me, and worth mentioning. i found it difficult to read the protesting section

of greg's zine, and did not finish it. sorry. next is a very brief overview of historic vancouver, canada- not very interesting, although greg's follow-up, with personal thoughts and humanity were good. from there there is a section on portland, oregon- half reprinted from another zine (*livin' in doom town*), about historic districts and gentrification in portland, and the other greg's thoughts on staying in portland and gentrification. greg's part is by far the more interesting and readable of the two. the remainder of the zine was reprinted, dry, fact-filled stuff from *revolt* zine, out of eugene, who are such 'revolutionaries' that they kept money i sent them for zines and never sent me anything. in all, *complete control* is worth reading, and thought-provoking, but this issue did not do it for me. also, greg, 'affect' and 'effect' are two different words. **postscript:** greg mentions that he wanted to make this a 'northwest issue'. i find it funny that he hits only the hipster towns- sleaze-attle, vancouver, portland, eugene- i don't see any mention of spokane. spokane does not have a 'vibrant community', or an 'anarchist community', or even a 'hip section of town'- it is reality. i suggest greg come round to other areas of the northwest that are not situated on the coast and packed full of hipsters: cities like spokane, or missoula, or medicine hat, or boise. this is *my* reality, the northwest i live in- not squats and collectives and no natives. in spokane, when one turns eighteen, one generally moves to a hipster town: seattle or portland, primarily. those of us who have a sense of history / duty stay here, and suffer for it perhaps. maybe seattle and portland end up that much hipper, but they are in no need of further hip-ness, and spokane suffers duly. that is what it is like here.

impending doom #3 (\$1 / anthony / 3933 benson ave n. / st pete / fl / 33713)
pretty brief zine with some personal and political writing. none of it was bad, but the part that caught my eye was an interview with 'Bob Suren' ('Minimum order is \$10 or IT WILL BE RETURNED. i'm not kidding.') who writes about his band and distro and store. i will say that i liked his band Failure Face, on "Burrito Records" (and also Ebullition i think!) and that everyone made fun of me years ago for that, but fuck it. i did not agree with his statement '..If you are complaining about your scene sucking, look

v. gainesville & bikes.

in some ways, this is sort of a follow-up to bike articles that were in issues ten and twelve, and in most ways, it's an ongoing ramble on the place of bikes, and my relation to that place.

when i first moved to gainesville, one of the things i immediately noticed was the prevalence of bikes. everyone rode them; everyone had one. not just punk kids and people i knew, but random people cruised down the street, rolling down university avenue, on and off the side-walks. every building boasted a bike rack out front, often full, and the town was littered with bike shops and bicyclists in general. it was no Amsterdam, no Copenhagen, or some other bike-filled northern European city, but it was definitely a "bike city".

"and you need a bike," travis said, as we were walking one night. "yeah, i know," i said. "but i'll round one up somehow."

"just go buy a beater," he advised. "they go for maybe fifty... seventy-five dollars." at this i let out a gasp of surprise: first off, where i am from, we do not use the term "beater" (rather, we say "trashed-out old bike"), and, moreover, they "go for" perhaps one to ten dollars! now why should this be? and i saw, it is because in spokane, there is no call for bikes: they are largely useless, whereas in gainesville a bike is nearly essential, somewhere between a great convenience and an obvious solution.

i am originally from claremont, a small college town within the metropolis of los angeles. and i always had a bike, as long back as i can remember. i rode everywhere on it- around my neighbourhood, to friend's houses, to the store for candy. as i got a bit older, i would ride it around town searching for garage sales, or through alley-ways looking for dumpsters to dive. i rode it to school and to the library. i rode it to "music plus" to buy my first tape (the cure, fucker). and most everyone else rode their bikes, too. i would ride to my friend andrew's house, and he and his brother rowland, along with my brother, would ride to strange places to explore, or ride out on our late-night toilet-papering rounds,

or ride down huge hills and jump curbs or whatever. it was, simply, an essential part of my life.

by my early teen-age years, we had moved to spokane. my bike being, in the gainesville vernacular, "a beater", i had left it behind, and, settling in spokane, i set about getting a new bike. i got one for my birth-day. and immediately, i realized i had a problem which i had not previously noticed: there was no-where to ride. we lived in the suburbs.

of course i had no friends to whose houses i could ride, and the neighbourhood was so hilly that aimless cruising resulted only in pointless exhaustion. i decided to attempt a trip to the nearest store, about four miles away. the eight-mile round trip down a bone-rattling, pot-holed dirt highway for a candy bar was not this fourteen year old's idea of fun. and then winter came, and snow covered the land, and i put my bike away, and thought little of it in the next few years.

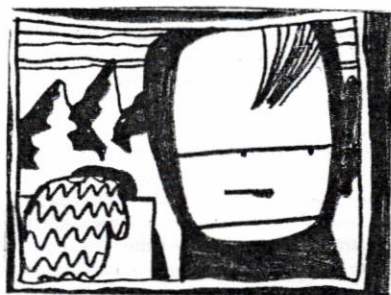
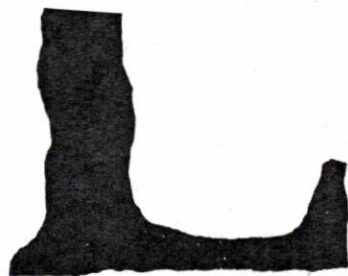
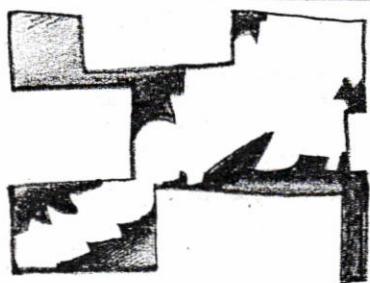
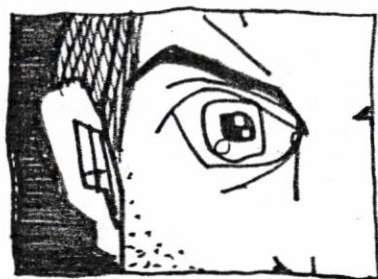
my father often got mad that i did not "appreciate" my gift, for i never used it. had i grown out of bikes? whatever happened to the me of claremont, body and bike inseparable? he did not understand. he did not see that i had no-where to ride to. downtown and back was an all-day ride. any friends i may have had were scattered wide- on the south-end of town perhaps, an easy forty miles round trip. and besides, from october to march, the town was covered in snow, and there were plenty of other cold northwestern months that made bike-riding uncomfortable and impractical.

and to the "hard-core cyclists" it's all whining and a cop-out: critical mass laughed at me when i took my bike on the bus to get home from their ride. some hick-kids live far further out than i, and ride into town all the time, sometimes taking days to do it. and that's all fair enough, but i guess i just don't love bikes enough.

and i know there are others like me. i will always remember a time back in 1993, when Fifteen played out at the Sunset Grange in Airway Heights, about fifteen miles out of Spokane. griff tells the story much better than do i, but anyway- Jeff Ott was on stage, tie-dyed, pontificating and adopting his usual holier-than-thou attitude, berating people for driving (nevermind their tour van, ahem) out to the show. "Cars are evil, destructive polluting death machines!" he preached. "How many rode their bikes to this show instead of driving?"

there was silence: of course no-one had-

to the WTO protests, and greg's experience there. i have a real hard time with this. first off, i am sick to fucking death of the WTO protests. that is all done and over with (now go start *more* riots, instead of spanking it over the wto riots), and honestly, i didn't care much to begin with. i really don't care to read 'my day at the wto' by joe blow, or 'me vs the imf' by sarah stain or something: i really don't; i really don't care. why? because they are not compelling reading! we know how it will end, and there wasn't much to say anyhow: you become part of an anxiety-ridden mass blob and are abused by the state. don't get me wrong- i am totally for protests and killing cops and smashing out windows, but if you are going to write about it, make it *good*. greg's is better than most, but is that saying much? his writing is littered with acronyms and abbreviations. for example- on N30, DAN & 420 met with IMC at SOCC for WTO/IMF protests with AAHMCC. *what??? closer* inspection will reveal these to be all acronyms for something or other, but what's wrong with using english??? i mean, i talk about 'CDs' and 'TV' as much as anyone else, but calling the thirtieth of november "N30" is just ridiculous. in addition, all these acronyms make reading hard-going and dehumanize and beauracritize everything to me. there's a j church song, on the 10th on jade tree, that goes in part "burn down the buildings / riot in the streets ... carry your banners / and have protest marches... / i might agree with you / and everything that you do..." and that's very similar to how it is for me in a lot of ways (i left out the lines that were irrelevant for me). i agree with all this protesting, and that, but for me, it is one big panic attack. i can't deal with all that. i can't be part of mobs, however noble; i am ridden with anxiety and nervousness as it is, and i simply cannot sacrifice my health and sanity for politics. and it seems a lot of people have problems with that- "you're just lazy," they say. or: "why didn't you go to the WTO protests?", or in gainesville, "are you coming with us to the IMF protests? we plan to sleep on cold wet grass, eat like scavengers, etc etc". and i am not interested! it is hard enough for me to survive in the day-to-day world without placing myself in stressful, dangerous situations. i commend those who do, but i cannot. after expressing thoughts like these, activists tend to look down on you and write you off as a 'big talker' or a 'flake'. but where are the anarchist zines they have been putting out for five years? where are their paintings, and their novels? we all do our part in 'the struggle,' and my part is in art and writing and such. this much is true. i am by nature generally an observer, not an activist. do the



the grange was fifteen miles out of town on an interstate highway!

"shame on you!" said Jeff Ott.

"Listen, fucker!" called this kid Joe Kelleher, from the crowd. "I live forty fucking miles from here, as do most of us, and there is no way in hell we are going to ride our bikes here and back. So shut the fuck up, because you don't know what you're talking about."

Jeff Ott looked sheepish and didn't mention bicycles anymore. And as much as i agree with him that cars are bad news, to those of us that don't live in Berkeley or Santa Rosa or small-town U.S.A. or major-metropolis-with-adequate-public-transportation U.S.A., cars remain, by-and-large, a somewhat necessary evil. and therefore, coming back to the bikes in gainesville situation, in towns like spokane, bikes go for a dime a dozen; their usefulness being limited. in towns where bike-riding is feasible and practiced, bikes demand a higher price. it's simple enough.

so what did i learn? gainesville is good for bikes, like santa rosa is good for bikes, like even paris is good for bikes. spokane sucks for bikes; seattle sucks for bikes. fair enough. but i still think seventy-five dollars is way too fuckin' steep for a trashed-out old bike.

your-own adventure books. to him, they were great literature. i believe someone once found one on the ground, and was making fun of it, when the crustie asked if he could have it. this crustie subsequently spent days and days reading the slim volume, frantically flipping through the pages and slowly reading the paragraphs, finger guiding him along each line as he sounded out the polysyllabic words. so, what kind of man reads 'choose-your-own-adventure' books? him, and me, when i was in about third grade. at that time, the silver-covered 'time machine' choose-your-own-adventure books had come out, which i preferred dramatically to the run-of-the-mill Scholastic drivel. eventually i even abandoned the Time Machine books in favor of 'wizards, warriors and YOU', and then the Steve Jackson books, the umbrella title of which i do not recall, although i recall one being called 'the Castle of Balthus Dire'. anyhow, these were more fun because you had to roll dice to go to certain pages- i didn't actually do the dice-rolling because i couldn't understand it- but it seemed fun. i ended up writing many, many choose-your-own-adventure books (my babysitter was quite impressed with some of them- reckoned i was a child genius- duh) before graduating to playing honest-to-goodness dungeons and dragons. thankfully, i gave that phase up when we discovered girls - unlike half the crusties in this town, who sit in tight circles, discussing their "campaigns" and "gelatinous blobs".

so i read this zine, and it was a choose-your-own-adventure. it was all a little ridiculous and far-fetched, and there is no real point to your choices, since you die randomly in most of the choices. DYS is mentioned as 'Boston's best band'. there are coarsely half-toned photos every other page, depicting strange subject matter akin to men's recovery project art. the layout of the zine resembles a man in the bastard sleeve. i don't really like this zine. the kid that wrote it is nice i guess, but unless you're into choose-your-own-adventures, i couldn't recommend it. **FEEBLE BONUS:** becky took this zine to work and returned it to me with weird stains all over it, and this to say: "it was horrible, fucking horrible. very boring, and most of it did not make sense. nothing cool happened, and i was pretty fuckin' disappointed. picking my nose was more adventurous. uh... as for the artwork, there's a certain limit to smoking pot, kids. the dude goes to live with pirates. uh... gasp." (??)

complete control #6 (\$1 / greg / po box 5021 / richmond / va / 23220)

i have been singing the praises of this zine for the last little bit- since it has improved greatly and thus made it one of the better zines out there to-day- but this issue is something of a let-down for me. most of this issue is dedicated



sense and are worth reading, it's most comparable to the book that rob sutter iii put out a few years back, *swallowed by the world*. in that book, jonas (a thinly disguised rob) has a series of punk rock related adventures, some paralleling rob's real life, and others straight fiction. that's how *dead city* is. 'gypsy', often the central character, is obviously dmitri, and i'm sure plenty of these stories have some truth to them and the rest imagination. it's great.

my complaints- the typewritten text makes the zine look beautiful, but the readability and spelling suffer. secondly, i could really do without all the drunken pity and alcoholism-as-an-artists-way-of-life nonsense. i don't mind some drunken behaviour in literature, but i think, honestly, every story in here mentions vomiting or blacking out. as a plot device it is exceedingly tiresome, as it is in real life. it did not deter me though, and i really enjoyed reading this zine and plan to search out past issues. if you liked *swallowed by the world*, this is an awesome zine in that vein, and very much recommended.

lose #3 (stamp / jason / po box 230823 / boston / mass / 02123)

this is a choose-your-own adventure book in zine format. okay... um... there used to be this local crustie, who actually was a neo-Nazi, until he took to hanging out with crusties, who convinced him crust was superior to racism (i agree). however, this crustie (who went by the 'gang name' "Popeye") was not too bright (duh, he was a Nazi), and mainly sat around scratching his nuts and aching for beer. there was one thing, as i recall, that this crustie skinhead was highly interested in: choose-



vi. gainesville & stephen jay gould.

travis moved me out from the living room into an unoccupied bedroom at the front of the house. the room's occupant, he told me, was travelling through china just then, but had paid several months' rent in advance so as to keep his room. as this fellow would not be back for a while yet, i settled into his room.

it was a strange room: piles of unidentifiable clothing, shelves covered with pennies and nickels, the room basically empty save for a huge bed. the hardwood floors were ripped up and discoloured and faded; a bathroom adjoining the room stank and had a urine-stained toilet. i tried to get a sense of who this fellow was, by the look of his room.

"he's a nerd," travis said. "he's an older guy."

"he certainly doesn't seem to own many possessions," i noted.

it was true- the room was, as i mentioned, for all intents and purposes, empty. no emphemra stood on the shelves; there were no posters, no records, no plants or belongings of any kind. the sole items of sentimental value i found sat on the shelf by the door: a high school yearbook ("class of 1987") and a small stack of (presumably) family photos, most from the late 1980s, and with people's thumbs over the lens, or dark exposures.

i finally found some books, up on a top of a bookshelf. they only confused me even more: *catch 22*, a german-english dictionary; a copy of *sci-fi fiction monthly*, gogol, *your guide to caravanning across the sabara*; a russian history text.

i also found in this strange collection a hardback copy of stephan jay gould's *bully for brontosaurus*. i lay on the bed and looked through it, and then began reading it. i was quite happy to have found this book. science and such difficult subjects

have always fascinated yet eluded me, and gould's work on biology and evolution i found to be by far the best. he has written a good amount of books, mainly concerning evolution and darwinism, some touching on anthropology, geology, archeology, and biology—always interesting, and gould something of a renaissance man in many ways.

a few days later, while sitting at 'gyros plus' and eating filafel of questionable origin, i happened on a copy of one of the multitude of silly college newspapers that were always floating around gainesville. i flipped through it, and was surprised to see a photo of stephen jay gould, as well as an announcement which stated that he would be giving a free lecture that week, on evolution, at the natural history museum! what coincidence! i tore out the announcement and looked forward to the event. at night, i read and re-read *bully for brontosaurus*. i thought even that perhaps i might take the book along and have gould autograph it, as a thank-you to the book's mysterious owner for letting me (unbeknownst to him) stay in his room. that idea was dashed when a new announcement appeared, changing the date of the lecture, and adding "no photographs, autographs or book signings!".

and so, a few days later, the event came. i rode on a borrowed bike out to the museum—about forty-five minute's ride, through strip malls and dilapidated houses covered in moss; through bits of the stop-and-start college campus and past graffitied walls. i found the venue—a large concert hall. i stopped and gasped.

i had no idea so many people were into stephen jay gould! even allowing for a prevalence of greasy high-school and college kids trudging to the lecture for extra credit in biology, the crowd was immense. lines were stretching out of the building, and cars were being directed into the lot like it was disneyland, or a sports game.

and i had reckoned on being the only punk in attendance— but the girl first in line had a bag sporting a patch of notorious b-grade los angeles peace punks

you a video." (sic sic sic). next there is a page of poorly reproduced photos of a hair/butt-rock band wailing. a note mentions that this butt rock band doesn't "care if you like them or not". i don't. next is an interview with a band called "Nuclear OverDose" (uh...), from 1987 (uh...), by a person named "Toxic Popsicles" (uh...)—there is a photo of some longhairs wearing "jams" rocking out in a barn in the mid-1980s. here's an excerpt! — "Q. What are your influences, musically? A. AC/DC... Cro-Mags..." "Q. Are you straight edge? A. Dave is but other wise Fuck'n No way! i think it's cool but if they're trying to be cool, Fuck em." (sic) "Q. Any last comments? A. United and strong." Huh???? ha ha ha!!! Next is some crap about tattoos and a bearded dude called "Cuz'n Bill", or "Cuz". The text also refers to "Cus'n Bill"; it doesn't say if this is the same as "Cuz'n Bill" or if one is someone's cousin and the other one swears a lot. anyway, the tattoos are of deer and skulls. stupid. Next is a page of photos of inbred white trash kids whose parents have put tattoos of skulls and demons on their chests. Imagine being some poor kid with white trash parents who branded you with white trash tattoos over your entire body at the age of one! Oh man! Ending this zine up is a comic cut out of the newspaper and "Bill's Top 10 Band Is" (sic), one of which is "Crusifucks" (sic). I love it when poor morons can't spell the names of their favourite bands. Ah, to be illiterate. Fuckin' Crucifucks kick ass though. There was one good page in this zine, i must mention: "Pet Page". It showed photos of a little cat playing on a sink and rolling around on the floor. I would like to pet that little cat! Well, if you order this zine, or look at it after reading this, or anything else, you are a big ass fucking loser, and you suck. (*scab aka "kid is love tat is too (sic)" aka "twizzlers ain't licorice"*)

dead city #6 (\$1 / dmitri / 539 washington ne / warren / oh / 44483)

a really nice zine here. it's mostly fiction, or autobiographical fiction (as a lot tends to be: writing about 'what you know' as the cliché goes) by dmitri. he sent along a little advertisement with it which reads: "MRR called it 'cometbus for crusties'. i love cometbus and was still insulted". (the ad also name-drops Mike Straight, who was interviewed way back in 1996 in *cryptic slaughter* number six, as well as Bukowski, who i have not interviewed). so, 'cometbus for crusties'? i didn't see it. there's little to do with crusties, and lots to do with getting drunk and macking on women, which cometbus has plenty of point taken, though.

so this zine is a collection of short stories, each a few pages long, painfully type-written out on a trashed type-writer. dmitri is an able writer, and the stories generally make

i suppose it's 'punk' to listen to shitty oi bands and Seig Heil your friends, at least it always has been around here— so i liked this article calling the shit shit. the rest of the zine is made up of zine interviews, mostly crustie-oriented. i enjoyed seeing his review of 'magleslakt', which he calls the 'premiere US underground DIY hardcore zine'. these silly hessians tried to trade with me, thinking that since my zine was called 'cryptic slaughter' it must surely be filled with butt-rock and ragin' power violence thrash. when they found it was full of writing, didn't have gruesome war photos or dead people, and didn't have anything to do with heavy metal, they no longer wanted to trade. POSERS!!! finally, the record reviews talk about "disasteriously delicious gritty production", "shredding guitar solos that rip", "blazing, metal influenced songs with slow moshy parts", records with thank-yous to "alcohol, pot and amphetamines", and a record called "Satan Escapes From Hell" which is "brutal HC thrash with a call for Pot Smokers and Hemp Warriors unity". huh????! this shit is purely for laughs. there you go.

action! photozine #2 (\$2 / jason / po box 12505 / gainesville / fl / 32604)

first off, i have two other issues of *action!*, which i believe are number one and two— so where this fits in, i don't know. jason leonard put this out for icky (i don't get how this guy cons other people into doing his zines for him; i really don't), and the price is steep, but it's an odd presentation, and probably costs about two bucks just to mail. icky presents a series of grainy, computer-scanned photos he has taken. some suck, some are good. my favourites are the shots of gainesville, college-rockers 'franklin', *spin* magazine darlings 'discount' (uh..), and some photos of the old hardback. the ones that suck are pictures of intolerant straight-edgers "xculturex", sony recording artists "the donnas", and some other crap. on the last page is an ad from dischord records, hawking their \$12 CDs. about half this zine can suck it, and the other half is good. i got it for free, so i was saved the decision. balls in your mouth.

jurassic punk old school punk #1 (sic) (buttwipe, florida)

i really kind of needed this— i have been reading so many good zines lately that i needed one to make negative mean comments about. me and tyann talked shit about this while drinking coffee. anyhow, the crude cover promises "TATTOO IS & BANDS" (sic), as well as "Lot is of Pictures" (sic) and shows a fat man with a cane wearing a Germs shirt. okay, i like the germs. The introduction goes: "Wellcome... so send me Tapes for reviews band info. Scene reviews your opinions... I'm lazy and can't spell. So help an old man out. Send me a blank Vidio tape and I will make

Autonomy. i was only reminded that my own girlfriend was far away.

we were led into a dreadfully modern theatre: large, lit, soul-less. i walked up to the front, to find the first few rows being reserved for some muckety-mucks or whoever. i took a seat next to an elderly man, leafing nervously through a paperback book purporting to hold "scientific evidence proving the existence of the soul". across the aisle a newspaper reporter for the gainesville *sun* attempted to get her "scoop", questioning a ridiculous pair of hippies. "i heard his [gould's] name in my biology class," the female hippie confided, adding quickly "but i saw him on TV once. i'm really a fan."

two rotund women behind me discussed passionately their love of strip malls in alabama: "i love it— the Target, the Wal-Mart— all at one place!"

evolution...? not so far.

down the aisle a frizzy-haired woman clutched a picnic basket (?) and periodically gave me the stank eye.

the first two rows finally filled up with balding white fogeys in suits, and then some other suit took the stage and began waxing stupid about some crap or other. finally he introduced gould. a short, lumpy, bumbling fellow stumbled up to the podium, put on and then removed his spectacles, repeated this process, and then, flustered, brushed his hair from his face and breathlessly began.

and it was a brilliant speech— enlightening, and new, in spite of my having read plenty on the topics at hand. gould is very smart; a real intellectual, which seems to rare of late (though perhaps it has always been like this), or at least so rare that it's revealed so honestly and passionately. and though i am often lost, when, in some of gould's writing the science becomes too incomprehensible for me, there was none of that. indeed, gould mispronounced his learned French, and thinks that 'human' is pronounced 'yooman': even i can speak French and say 'human', so it brought gould down to earth. maybe i can't do science, but he's no francophone! and therein lay a lesson for me.

the lecture was hurried, and as it always is with these things, the audience question-and-answer time was criminally brief. and gould got a great applause and then fumbled way across the plaza to an elite "invitation-only reception" being held by nameless muckety-mucks- gould too eminent a scientist for the common man-? or does an animated appearance on 'the simpsons' suffice? gould's talk urged us to 'unlearn' binaural, dichotomized thinking: zero or one, on or off, mate or wait, have or have-not. yet i saw the "haves", their work-study butlers kissing their pasty white asses as they "rubbed shoulders" with gould, and i saw the "have-nots" stuck in traffic, cars filing out the lot, directed by flunkies in vests. i rode out in to the bike-lane- bike-lane!- the air first smelling beautiful, like warm vanilla soy milk and cinnamon, and then, slowly fading, giving way to the stench of sweat and shit.

massachussets. they were called 'karate'. as i recall, they never showed up, but the other bands were good. that was six years ago, at least. anyway, here's a split zine from there. *the world is broken* is by a girl i sort of know, bri- she lived in spokane for a while, or so she tells me- she only hung out with neo-nazis and heroin junkies- claimed she didn't know any better. i am inclined to believe her somewhat, since many decent people i meet nowadays were formers losers who spent most of their formative years in spokane being drunk and racist with shirtless nazis. i must have missed this phase, or had just a bit too much intelligence to spend my teenage years in such company, but whatever... bri's zine is mostly personal stuff on her family and friends. most of the stories involve being drunk and semi-incoherent: not really my thing. she has reprints from 'steal this book', that nonsense book of 'scams' from forty or more years ago, few of which have any relevance whatsoever to the twenty-first century. instead of reprinting rambling hippie nonsense about siphoning gasoline with your mouth and "seizing the steak", i think bri should have printed some scams that are new, relevant, tested, and feasible. her zine is not earth-shaking, but not bad. *upheaval* is a crustie zine. the front cover is purely stupid, and the 'intro' is an extended list of 'shout-outs' to his brothers in heavy metal, or something. so, there are two or three pages of personal thoughts: one was not bad at all; it was about crusties and other losers who like to blast neo-Nazi music and get drunk and affect 'neo-fascist mannerisms'. aside from bri's former flirtations with same, which i mentioned previously, most mohawk losers in this town (or indeed, any other) are this way. this crustie girl Becky i lived with had her mohawk leather-jacket boyfriend over all the time so they could get drunk and screw and belch on each other. he always spouted off about anarchism before blasting trebly neo-Nazi tapes: any irony or stupidity evidenced being strictly beyond this lunkhead. so it goes!



wonderful broken thing #1 (\$1 / nate
powell / 7205 geronimo / n. little rock / ar /
72116)

how this is different from the *schwa* sound i
don't see, but ok. do you enjoy post-punk
ramblings, mixed with a hint of early 90s emo
optimism? do you like well-drawn comics that
are meaningless, pointless, sappy and
wordless? do you like reading zines without a
hint of concreteness or actuality, just floaty
abstractions and drawings of skinny white
boys with shaggy facial hair? ugh. i don't like
any of this, so i don't like this zine too much. i
like nate's art, in general, so i was hoping to
like this— i was hoping the comics would tell a
story— a story i could understand. they really
didn't. i'm not saying this zine is shitty, just
that it went in one eye and out the other. it's
more than worth looking at, but it did nothing
for me.

teenage death songs #11 (\$1 / kim / po
box 5664 / richmond / va / 23220)

some years ago, when i was staying in
santa rosa, at the matt house (or perhaps it
was the benet valley house by then--?), i used
to come home late on warm summer nights to
find the house's occupants watching movies on
the VCR. very few things annoy me as much as
'watching movies', especially when it's summer
and beautiful out. i usually went and sat out
on the porch on one of ratty old couches,
fished around for matches, lit a candle, and
read zines out of a stack i had found on the
side of the house. who stored their zines out-
of-doors i know not, so i don't know who to
thank- but among the zines that were out there
was 'square suckers'. and 'teenage death
songs' = 'square suckers', and a very good
zine it is, at that. i don't think i can write on
the content or anything- there are not articles
or things per se. it's personal writing- very
verbose and introspective and full of
observations, and all written so well that it is
bordering on fiction. i am no fan of fiction,
really, because it often confuses me and my
small imagination. this, however, is very good
stuff. if i may drop a few names- there are
moments when aaron cometbus come
through; as clichéd as that is, i hear it
sometimes. not in the zine format, or style, or
sense- but in the writing. next, john steinbeck-
honestly! some of the descriptions of people
just remind me of steinbeck's. this zine is
excellent. the style and content is a difficult
one, and something i could never do, not
without being insufferably amateurish or
cheesy. kim pulls it off, and it is amazing. i
highly recommend this zine.

the world is broken #3 / upheaval #6
(\$1 / p.o. box 471 / allston / ma / 02134)
once i went to see a band from allston,



vii. gaines ville- casey.

one evening i walked down to the wayward council to see some bands play. actually, i wasn't really interested in the bands; i was more there because i had heard some local hipsters planned to cook up a vegan dinner for the touring band. i figured i could eat some of this vegan dinner and no-one would be any the wiser. so i went in and sat down in between two unlikely characters: lois, the pre-riot grrrl folk singer, and some fellow who was in verbal assault. (??) they were munching on salad and rice and making mature, thirty-and-up comments and conversation. i set to work on the vegan spread and soon became aware of someone watching me. i looked up.

"do you remember me?" casey asked.
"what are you doing here?"

she was sitting across from me, uninterested in the food, looking at me like she was seeing an illusion.

"i live here," i said.

"oh...! wow! for how long?"

"about a month."

"weird!"

she was from spokane, that is how we knew each other. she used to work at one of the cafés in town that me and griff used to rot away in. she slipped us free drinks when she could and drew chocolate fetuses in the frothy cream when she couldn't. me and griff used to play twenty questions with her out on the patio-- i remembered once we were highly amused when griff asked "do you consider yourself a hippie?" and she hesitated before saying no. and she could sing, and play piano very well. we got her to join our band, kill the edison, on keyboards, but it never worked out. she came to shows now and again, and i liked talking to her. wasn't judd hot for her? yes, i think he was-- that must have been how i'd met her, years ago. and these things i began recalling as

edge he was. it turns out, thankfully, that neither of these two ridiculous scenarios is the case. this is a strange little zine. it's all done on a computer, and copied all nice (no washed-out areas or poorly reproduced areas) and all meticulously designed and laid-out- sterile, sort-of, sans serifed font the whole way through. not bad though, not too annoying. first there is an interview with atom, of a. and his package. atom came to spokane recently, and was able to confirm that *cryptic slaughter* was the first ever zine to interview him, way back in 1995 or so. so, i hereby state that all y'all other zines are biting my steez. in any case, it's a pretty good atom interview, and heaven knows there's a million of them out there. somewhat annoyingly, all of 'r jones' questions are misspelled and/or in some sort of broken english. for example: "OK what's with all the M's I mean the Metallica flares are all over the place is this a cry for help?" (sic!) i think that is three sentences that 'r jones' has as one-? how about this one: "You mentioned you (sic) have the qualifications for a good job I was just wondering what kind of job," - okay, check that out. this 'question' actually ends with a comma. besides, it's a run-on sentence. next is an interview with 'evil designs'. someone mailed me a bunch of stickers once of 'evil designs'- it was like shaky drawings of growling girls and such-like. i think one is on sybille's remote control, and one of panthro u.k. took some- but i must say i didn't understand the point. predictably, this guy has nothing to say. next we have an interview with al burian (funny, sybille's lockdown zine had interviews with atom and al... and she lusts after portland...). it's a long one, and pretty interesting. i have no love for mr burian, but i don't mind reading his ramblings, as long as he doesn't begin to spout off his ridiculous opinions. as for his comment 'i don't like animals'- this fucker came to sybille's house and began abusing our cat, placing it under things and swinging it about and stuff. his excuse was 'i don't like animals'. well, i don't like you, al burian, so take a fuckin' hike already! and by the way, milemarker sucks. (editor's note: you can read more about my gruesome encounter with al in 'funky snuts #4', one stamp from the cryptic slaughter address.) there are also some rather unlikely photos (the melvins --?), some meaningless cartoons, etc etc. this is nothing super special, and i find it a little weird that it's all computer-generated, yet not spell-checked at least. i suppose that wouldn't help out 'r jones' in his inability to form a sentence, though... this zine is worth checking out, for al and atom, if nothing else. BONUS: this zine was "inspired by DEL 'The Funkee Homosapien' (sic) and 'The Get Up Kids'". i think that about sums it all up.

reminds me of some more amateurish riot grrrl zines hannele has, or even some of mine from five or six years ago; these things being generally good. this zine is not awesome, but it is decent, and shows plenty of room to make it really rad. if this zine continues, i have high hopes for it. PS. This zine was "assembled in eight hours". one, it shows; and two, wouldn't it be nice. PSS. this zine give special thanks "for inspiration" to Project Hate, Bread & Circuits, Submission Hold, Saké, and Harum Scarum. And Sybille was just trying to tell me that all the good bands were from the east coast. HA! I'm going to go listen to all those bands right now.

paper crown #1 (\$1 / shaun / 8128 constitution #8 / sterling heights / mi / 48313)
awesome zine from michigan. shaun, the writer, has some low self-esteem or something that prevents him from doing this zine with any regularity, which is a shame. excellent and funny stories about his first shows, the first punk rock he got into, the girls he went out with in junior high, and some other stuff. my only complaint is the occasional self-pity rambling, and his "i'm not punk" attitude. that's just silly. i will cut this short because i have no negative comments and i am tired of writing reviews and i said i would "be gentle". cuddle cuddle, coochie-coo.

chumpire #127 (stamp / greg / po box 680 / conneaut lake / pa / 16316)
infamous one-page rambling. they tell me it's good, but i don't see it. reviews of this usually go: "...always interesting thoughts from greg knowles.." or things like that. i doubted it; judd said last year "no, it's actually good." ... it's not. poorly constructed sentences, middle-of-the-road / conservative opinion, very uninteresting topics (this issue is thoughts on his station wagon (??), the Three Stooges, ren and stimpy..) - just doesn't interest me. his band on the education comp was not bad though, and if he is in the band 'buttercup', they fucking kick ass and you must hear them; they are my earth, moon and stars.

this was no boating accident #1 (\$1 / r. jones / 2156 nw davis #2 / portland / oregon / 97210)

by the address, it sounds like an apartment in portland, which makes me so annoyed. you see, it's the dream of every hare-brained loser in spokane to go live in an apartment in portland, and become a hipster, and drink at all the "cool bars" (oxymoron), and that just so seems like what's going on here. i shouldn't say that- but that was my first worry. my second was that it was some kid from portland called 's. jones' who used to write me sloppy letters about how straight-

we walked out on to university avenue and she lit up a cigarette.

"and what are you doing here?" i asked.

"i'm in a band!" she said.

"oh, you are?" i asked, surprised. "one of these bands to-night?"

"yeah, i play keyboards in Lois!"

"oh, you do-?"

"yeah, i basically fill in for one of the guys from Fugazi- he wrote all the keyboard lines. but he couldn't tour, he had a kid or something. so i learned the keyboard lines, and now i'm doing it. i sing sometimes, too. it's pretty cool."

i didn't know what to say.

"it's not a punk band, i know. we really only play college campuses. we get like \$3,000 a night, and Lois gives me some of that."

"it must be nice." was all i could get out.

"let's go get coffee. do you want to?"

we walked down university, and i was very happy to see casey. i was happy to see another spokanite, even if she'd lived in Olympia for a year. we passed by a van with Washington plates and spokane frames- "That's what we're touring in," she said. "My dad's van."

i pointed out everything i had learned about gainesville as we walked. i showed her the sights, and we caught up on spokane and spokane gossip. i got home-sick.

"gainesville is small." she said.

"you don't like it?" i asked.

"it's a college town." she said, noncommittally.

i had never been to any of the "hip" coffee shops on university, just for that reason- there were always dime-a-dozen greasy hipsters sprawled out all over the place, and "hip" "punk girls" behind the counter who had adopted the cool look of the later twentieth century but wouldn't know

punk if it hit them in the face.

but casey insisted we go in them: the first one was a dark, dingy place, with droning, spacey hipster music farting out of the speakers and strung-out hipsters leaning on the filthy tables. it was a bar, i guess, but they also sold coffee—weak, overpriced espresso shots that casey spit out, rolling her eyes, mumbling “I’ll go back there and pull more shots myself—this shit is like water!”.

so we went down to the next coffee shop— it was more brightly lit, and had more hipsters. during the day-time, they were always sitting out front, slurping their espressos, heads in hands, giving me the stank eye when i would ride by on my bike.

casey asked for some espresso concoction, with multiple shots and soy milk and such-like. even having made coffee for a living, i still don’t understand the terminology.

the girl behind the counter rang it up— \$1.25.

“A dollar twenty-five?!” casey said, incredulous. “what’s with these prices? that would be \$2.75 or \$3.50, easy, in washington!”

“i don’t think they’ve caught on yet.” i told her. “when i told people that in washington we had little espresso hots in parking lots, like hundreds of them in every city, they looked at me funny and said innocently ‘well, they must not make any money! in a parking lot! ha!’. i thought the phenomenon was all over the country, but here they’ve never seen things like ‘drive-thru espresso’.”

“really?” she asked. “i guess we just take this coffee shit for granted. that’s crazy.”

the girl interrupted us: “uh— sorry guys. our machine is broken, actually— i forgot. i’m really sorry.”

“what’s the matter with it?” asked casey.

the girl looked nervous and said stupidly “uh— well— like water comes out both sides, like this, and uh— i



hello my name is rachel #3-5 (price: “vegan cookies” (???— i sent two glued stamps, so = free) / rachel / 3269 25th / san francisco / ca / 94110)

short, small feminist jewish zine. it was funny to get this just after seeing an exhibition on Anne Frank, full of sad, anti-semitic images and such, and then this zine, which also talked about anti-semitism. i don’t have much to say on this, really, due to its brevity and such. the crux of the zine is feminism, and some aspects such as body image, and depression and such. there were some personal ramblings that i did not care for, some bits of poetry, family stuff, a thing on pacifism vs ‘armed resistance’ (which was interesting, but cut off half-way), etc. it

enforcement, weapons, and death, but mike has it too, as evidenced by his choice of artwork.

b.) i am a linguist, not a logger, but i was brought up to believe one 'fells' trees. mike makes numerous mentions of 'falling' trees. now, a tree may *fall* naturally, but they are *felled* by man. i looked up *fell* and it said 'to cause to fall'; *fall* said at about definition ten 'see *fell*'. so what are they teaching in Logging School these days?! to the non-english speakers amongst ye this may seem petty, but if we take *fall* to mean *fell*, we might as well just abandon the word *tree*, and just make grunting sounds instead, like crusties.

c.) i did not care for the articles on fucking hippies.

d.) mike makes a big deal about how the liberals and conservatives suck; corporation owners suck; the bourgeoisie sucks, kill 'em all, etc; but then writes a long heartfelt piece about how much he loves his dead neo-Nazi buddy, who had "a fully rockin' sense of humour", despite being a neo-Nazi (mike claims he was no longer a neo-Nazi, since he was not racist, just sexist and homophobic: yeah, like homosexuality was real acceptable in the Third Reich—uh—duhrrr...). but mike, maybe the liberals and corporation heads have real senses of humour, right? maybe they blast some awesome OI! and shoot up the finest heroin in their off time. so what, they still suck! and so does your dead Nazi buddy! mike makes every attempt to humanize the loser who is his buddy, but the losers that he doesn't know get no such treatment. it's inconsistent.

e.) food not bombs is largely pointless; i agree. critical mass is largely a hindrance to working class commuters; i agree. the IWW is not going to change a thing; i agree. however, that does not mean i want these organizations and activities to "shut the fuck up" or "give up", as Mike does. they may not produce any huge results, but they are better than nothing. they are all on the right track far more than some crappy Revelation Records bands Mike gives rave reviews to, or mike's drunken drugged-out friends. i would say that it is better to take a step in the right direction than to sit on one's ass, right? and it would be very hard to find anything wrong with FNB, Critical Mass, the IWW, veganism, or anything else in theory— the problems are in the small things and their assorted modes of operation and human flaws and techniques.

this is the best zine i have read in a long time. it is one of my favourite zines of all time (this issue, anyway). i don't agree with a lot of it; that's fine; it's well-written, has a far better personality than any other 'anarchist' zine i have ever read (actually, most i've read don't even have a personality); it's worth five times the price. i highly, highly recommend this zine.

don't really know."

"you probably have a clogged porta-filter," casey said.

"or a cracked retaining ring," i offered.

we looked at each other and laughed. here we were, two average washington punk kids, perfectly adept at fixing espresso machines. we had both worked in coffee, and had both fixed and rigged up broken espresso machines many times. and it's not like we were coffee fanatics— it was just a part of life; part of having a job in the northwest.

"i'm tempted to go back there and fix it," casey whispered to me.

"bust me out some Puro-Caff and i'll help you," i said.

we walked back out front.

"this shit wouldn't fly back in the northwest," casey said.

"no. it wouldn't." i agreed.

we walked back to the show, talking and gossiping and being happy. we made plans for the future, so we might see one another some time again; and then i watched her band play. they were not really my type of music, but i liked them.

"i'm surprised you didn't heckle us, or make some rude comments!" casey said, afterwards.

"i'm not in spokane," i sighed. "i don't think i could get away with that shit here. besides, you guys were good." and i talked to her the rest of the night— the most talking i had done in a while, happy it was to someone familiar and cool that i could relate to. it made me more and more home-sick; it made me want to be around spokane kids that i could understand. i told casey i would see her that summer, and her and her bandmates counted the paltry \$300 they had made that night and headed off.

and i wandered back to travis's house across the street and climbed in the window and went to bed, thinking about chance meetings and non-existent friendships and what a dreadful place i had come to.

crusties and mohawked losers prowled the town raping and beating women and non-whites.'

i said 'really-?': i had heard of this- so i asked if this was so when i wrote. the dude, mike, replied in a chicken-scratch scrawl that "he had nothing to do with any festivals" (i doubt this) and then wrote some other incoherent nonsense. i read his zine, and instead of finding it intelligent and insightful, as had been the *slug and lettuce* columns, this zine was full of reactionary, juvenile braggadocio. it was full of crap about how food not bombs sucks, and about how eating deer is vegan (?), and about how emma goldman called him "a scoundrel" (???). cody gave it the righteous raspberry in *cryptic slaughter* ten, citing the above crap, plus some other shit, like his list of "Punk Standards" to which one must adhere to (presumably mohawks and dim-wittedness), a ridiculous article about fucking some hippie, and some nonsense about how the IWW "sucks". i was bummed and ashamed that this zine was so fucking stupid.

so then i got this issue, number six. at first i was prepared for more of the same: we start off with his 'musical inspirations': major label heavy metal / butt-rock (Bolt Thrower, At the gates), country music (presumably more "real" and "working class" [and shitty as all hell, too]), shitty oi (as opposed to good oi) (Sham 69, the ExplO!ted, etc), liberal white people's "hip-hop" (the Coup), etc etc. i sighed and got bummed.

but this zine was fucking excellent. i spent a week maybe, reading an hour in it every night, listening to john coltrane and being happy. this zine is so fucking good. most of this fellow's reactionary beliefs are gone; the few that remain he presents purely hypothetically 'in order to spark debate' and so on; everything is pretty well thought out and written extremely well.

i have a few complaints: a) i don't care to look at photos of cops in zines. i know what cops look like. they are not "cool", especially grainy photos of cops with guns. i lived with this crustie girl, Becky. at first i was stoked that she was into crusty punk, because i have a large soft spot for the genre, and the only 'crusties' i ever meet are just confused hessians with patches. so we lived together, and i told her that i would have no posters on the walls of our apartment with depictions of cops, guns, or death. you see, these are things that suck, so i don't want to look at them. when i go outside i have to see cops, and guns, and death. when i am at home, i want to see nice things, like nice artwork, or photos of merit. so Becky had to fold up all her fold-out crustie sleeves, or cover up the offending depiction with another worthwhile poster. i still do not understand the attraction crusties have to law



reviews.



here are the reviews. i was reading where dan halligan, out of *ten things* zine, wrote that "long reviews generally have more to do with the reviewer than the thing being reviewed", which was why he stuck with shorter reviews. it seems to me, however, that short, imprecise, cookie-cutter reviews can be found in just about any zine you pick up— you know, "Dude, blazing longhair metal. Get this." or "Awesome newsprint zine, with interviews with the Descendents, Ramones, and lots of cool ads for NOFX and metal CDs. A must read!". i don't give a fuck for that shit. ok— i mean, it's fair enough in a big zine whose purpose is promotion and notifying the punk public of new projects and bands. as for this zine— i'm not fooling myself— no-one gives too much of a fuck about my opinion, so i may as well lay it flat out and tell a story as well. please send your zine along for review— bands are welcome to send music, but they don't. does this tell you anything? sometimes i am glad i'm a writer and not a musician...



antipathy #6 (mike / po box 11703 / eugene / or / 97440)

a few years back— maybe just two summers ago actually— i realized i had been reading some intelligent and insightful writing in *slug and lettuce*, and that the author, mike, had a zine. so i thought i would write to him, but judd said 'oh no, that dude— he's some dude that thinks he's so 'punk', but he's just stereotypical bullshit— he put on those crusty rape festivals in eugene where roving bands of

viii. gainesville.

i came to gainesville because i felt like i was useless in spokane. i felt that no matter what i tried to do, it was ultimately pointless. gainesville only showed me that that is the way it is anywhere— or the way it is for *me*, anyway.

i wanted to make gainesville mine. they wanted me to be a visitor. they wanted me to look at things politely, keep quiet, and let them get on with their town. i wanted to ask questions, though— i wanted to probe, and opine, and talk shit— criticize and learn and advise. not that i have all the answers, but just that i want to learn and can't be silent. i didn't know everyone's histories, and animosities and failures and triumphs. i took everyone and everything for what i saw— an honest approach that suits me. i spoke my mind, and the locals made it clear that this was undesirable— unthinkable, perhaps.

"but why are you so negative, though?" rob asked me one day while i was killing time at the 'anarchist' library, the civic media center. he had been 'excited to meet me' until he did.

"i don't know that i'm negative *per se*," i answered. "i'm honest, blunt, a bit arrogant— but honest."

"i think one should keep one's honesty to one's self," he said. "i mean, why say something if it's not nice?"

what can i say to that? to me, it's ridiculous. to them, it's a way of life— if, to me, a docile, simpleton's way of life.

"well, it's self-defeating," travis told me while we sat on the porch, he eating his pitas and crumbled soy burger, and i my ubiquitous cheapskate peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. "when you criticize people who are your 'friends', it just makes them not like you."

"i know," i told him. "honesty alienates people. the truth is harsh, i guess. people only survive off their illusions. besides, i don't have any friends anyway."

"but you never will, with your attitude." he countered. i stared out the screen window enclosing the florida-porch, seeing only low, overgrown trees and spanish moss dripping everywhere.

things got worse. i was more and more excluded— rumours got around, i suppose— and more and more i excluded myself from things. no-one i met was interested in me— they were all too caught up in their own, established soap opera lives. fair enough, i suppose. no-one seemed to be worth hanging out with anyway. i spent days at the library, getting to know all the homeless library nutcases, and being close to being one: my room at travis' being increasingly in jeopardy.

the few people i knew or had met i was unable to make any sense of. a girl left a note for me at the record store, saying she was a friend of a friend, and to get in touch. she was never home. jason leonard seemed nice, but he was always drunk or asleep. travis took me to all the local "cool vegan restaurants", but everything we ate tasted to me like meat.



you might be interested in?"

I got very bummed and said "No, not really."

And so I gave up on the temp jobs— they were not like the temp jobs that you read about in zines, where they ask you to make copies or answer telephones. So i did not return to the one place that called me back, wanting me to eat sewage or kill foreigners or whatever the jobs they had available were. instead, i managed to get lucky and find a job doing paperwork with the u.s. census. i shuffle forms and mark them and scan them and become sore, but it's only temporary. becky claims she's bummed i moved out; that she'll pay me back. travis in gainesville doesn't speak to me anymore. tyann works with me. sybille and i argue and fight and count off the days until we leave the country. and things are generally all-right, provided i take my medication.

"are you sure there's not meat in this, travis?" i would ask him, tasting some unmistakably meaty, vile taste, and having been stung a million times at a million restaurants.

"i don't think so."

"you don't *think* so, or there *isn't*?"

"i don't think so." he'd say, mid-munch. "it's good, though, huh?"

there was a record store on university avenue, run by "punk kids"— though they were certainly long past being "kids", and most of them only listened to indie rock. on the wall was a place where all the volunteers wrote lists of their favourite things. i was not allowed to (store volunteer by-law declared i had to live in gainesville for two months or something), but i made a list anyway. not of my favourite things, but of things i *didn't* like: rain, red tape, droning indie-rock.

it made people mad, apparently. it made me re-learn something i learned long ago, in spokane: a scene is only good when everyone agrees not to question it. mariko, previously civil to me, left a note there, over mine: "maybe gainesville is not the place for you."

i paid travis \$37 to drive me to the airport for my eight o'clock flight back to spokane. it was a long ride, tedious and boring. and as we finally neared orlando airport, travis leaned back at me and said, "giovanni, you are, honestly, the most annoying person i have ever met."

i got out of his van and went home.



ix. spokane.

i moved back in with becky, having no-where else to go. she said how she was happy i was back, that her stupid crustie skinhead friends were ruining her life. they had certainly ruined our apartment— three or four of them had moved in, and brought a bunch of shitty sex pistols records and half-drunk beers with them. the tiny apartment, a little studio, was packed with mohawked losers, twelve year old runaways, and teen-age crusties who should know better. they had a crappy misfits cover band that practiced in my kitchen, and they only ate 'beef ramen'. none of them paid any rent, just generally fucked up the apartment. they had clogged up the toilet a few weeks earlier, and had taken to pissing and shitting in my sink and bath-tub. becky had adopted some wandering feral cats, who the crusties and '77 hawkers abused and mistreated. an entire closet was filled with beer bottles that they were too lazy to take out to the trash. the living room was covered in posters of shitty 'oi' bands and u.s. flags. stains were everywhere: hair-dye in the bath-tub; beer on the carpet; unidentified stickiness in the kitchen. they had fucked up my apartment pretty thoroughly: i say 'mine', but i had to admit i had moved out with no intention of returning. and i know most people would say "dude, that sounds like a rockin' place to live!", but a lot of people are fucking stupid.

"what happened around here?" i asked becky.

"i got sick and had to go to the hospital for like a week," she said. "stomach pumped and everything. i gave one of my friends the keys to keep an eye on things. he invited his friends to move in, and they had parties over here every night, with like thirty kids crammed in here breaking things and being loud. the cops even came and arrested one of them on a warrant for spitting."

"which one-?" i asked.

she told me— it was the blubbery one she was sleeping with.

"did you make them clean it up? did you tell them off?" i asked.

xi. spokane, now.

i realized i needed a job, as becky owed me hundreds of dollars in back-rent and summer was coming on. i went around to temp agencies and wrote my life story on their applications, my Bachelor's Degree of Fine Arts being negated by "How much can you comfortably lift?"

"Do you like to garden?" asked the interviewer.

"I never have, but i suppose i could," i said.

"Well, do you cut your own lawn?" she asked.

"Yes," i said, though i don't have "a lawn".

"Can you tell the difference between weeds and flowers?"

"uh.... not really."

"Well," she said, talking slowly to me, "flowers have pretty colors and petals on them, and weeds don't."

i thought of something tyann had said: *what about dandelions?*

"Let me ask you this," she continued. "Are you proficient with a Weed-Whacker?"

"Uh... no. i don't know what that is."

"Oh, well, nevermind, then: for this job we need someone who has Weed-Whacker experience. How about trees? Do you like trees?"

"I like trees."

"Well, i have an opening at a logging camp about sixty miles out of town. Lifting felled trees and boards and stuff. Would that be something

"how old are you?" he asked me.

"thirty-five."

"no, dude— come on."

"thirty-five."

"oh. you're not fuckin' with me, are you?"

i kept swinging.

"are you guys ravers?"

we laughed and said no.

"you guys look like ravers."

no, i repeated. we were not ravers.

"are you skaters? then why do you have skate shoes? what kind of music do you listen to? who do you listen to?"

"do you know 'the 'Backstreet Boys'?" i asked.

the kid scowled and said confidently, "those guys are fags."

"they're hot, though," one of the girls added. "N Sync too, yo."

at this, the boy got mad.

"stop fuckin' sayin' 'yo'!", he howled in his prepubescent howl. "it's fuckin' gay."

he turned back to us, pulling up his sagging pants, and trying to look cool.

"so, what," he asked, eyes wide, "you guys only listen to faggot homo music?"

"i guess i do," i mused.

"are you a homo?"

i said that i was.

the boy looked shocked and wandered slowly back around to the other side of the slide, and began drawing on it. a car honked. the girls shrieked in unison: "Timmy, it's your mom!"

Timmy put his pen away and ran toward his mother's car, holding his baggy pants from falling down as he did. we remained swinging, slowly, half-heartedly.

bit by bit the girls were picked up, by their parents in their fancy cars. one advised us as she left to 'check' her graffito: "it's tight, yo. i'm gonna get a tattoo of it." her parents honked the horn again and she ran off.

we swang a bit more, kicking at the bark or poles of the swingset. the sun was setting over the bluff. and then our butts began to hurt, and we left.

"they wouldn't pay any attention," she said. "they just laughed at me and went on doing it. i was hoping you could make them listen."

i cleared the place out of all her stupid "punk" friends— gave them the boot and told them to stay out. they got mad: "becky, why are you siding with this straight-edge homo instead of us?". i cleaned the place top to bottom; tossed out their shitty "Best of Oi" albums, fixed the toilet, scoured the tub, and generally got the place back into semi-order. the wandering 13-year old crustie skinheads came back every night for about a week, begging to be let in so they could get drunk, trying to give becky hard luck stories about how no-one else would let them drink at their houses. finally they gave up. hopefully they died.

one of them stuck around, though— the one that was screwing becky. he began telling her about how she was "a stupid bitch" for having me live there, and throwing out her "true friends". and she began to echo his sentiments. he continued making messes and inviting over his nightly fan club of leather-jacketed twelve year olds from outlying hick towns when she wasn't home. the funny thing was, he had a house— he lived about five miles up the road. his rich parents just wouldn't let him drink and break bottles there, but he had such an urge for these obviously "punk" actions that he found it easier to manipulate some girl and do this shit at her house— now my house, too.

they fought every night, in between their whale-and-stick-insect fucking sessions, his huge, pale, veiny, blubbery man-tits spilling out of his sleeveless Misfits shirt, her emaciated ten-year-old boy body being crushed under him, the two of them moaning in pleasure while i tried to sleep next to all this. then they would argue, he calling her stupid for being vegan, and she calling him a moron for being a neo-Nazi.

their drama got to be too much for me. he refused to pay rent; she was unemployed. i was stuck in the middle, living there, but refusing to pay three people's rent. both of them refused to do dishes or clean up after themselves; he would grunt and read pornographic magazines while blasting Skrewdriver, she would have nervous breakdowns and start crying. and then one day she was admitted to the mental hospital, and i realized it was my cue to get the fuck out of that hideous apartment.





x. spokane- park life.

faced with nothing to do.

we were in a parking lot on the east side. we stood by our cars, i shivering and tyann listless, both of us done with obligations for the day and ready to hang out. coffee was out since tyann had been getting the coffee shakes, and then she said- "let's go swinging."

back to her house so she could find me a sweater - it was thick and tight and made me look like an outcast from Her Royal Navy's Merchant Marine; the kind of fellow who might like to be addressed as 'the cap'n'.

she said she knew of a park nearby, "down fourteenth, on the bluff." i wasn't even sure what a bluff was. we found the park- full of modern (read: plastic and gaudy) play equipment, and bark instead of sand.

we walked over toward the swingset, tyann rummaging around for her cigarettes, and i noting the incongruity of the situation. then, as we got closer, we saw a band of overgrown eleven-year old 'gangsta' girls drawing crude slogans and obscene pictures on the equipment, and swearing loudly.

we walked past them and hopped on the swings. it was hard to swing since they were too far of the ground, or perhaps we were too short. so we rocked lazily in the swings. a twelve-year old boy with a skateboard wandered over to us.

"hey, i know you," he said to tyann.

"i don't think so." she replied.

"yeah," he insisted. "you were with that other weird-lookin' lady at B.P. - i asked you to buy me cigarettes."

"oh, i guess so."

the boy sat down on the slide. the girls were at the top, still scrawling obscenities and giggling.

"mind if i smoke?" he asked.

i tried not to laugh. the twelve-year old adopted a world-weary look, and attempted to look casual and incongruous.